

coming year, is when the taxes start being raised. And, of course, the CBO has said those tax increases are going to be passed on in the form of higher premiums to people across this country. The benefits start 1,477 days from now.

So what we simply say in this motion is, let's commit this bill and bring it back out with the tax increases—if there are going to be tax increases; and many of us believe there should not be any, which is why we voted for the Crapo motion yesterday—but if you are going to raise taxes on America's small businesses, families, and individuals, at least align those so the policy, the substance of this bill, which begins 4 years from now, is synchronized so we are not slapping a huge new tax increase on America's small businesses in the middle of a recession and passing on those higher costs, which is what they will do, to people in this country in the form of higher insurance premiums.

So I say to the Senator from Texas, this is a very straightforward, simple motion. I hope our colleagues on both sides will support it. It is a matter of principle, of fairness when it comes to making policy that I think the American people have come to expect. We ought to be honest and give the American people a complete understanding of what this bill really costs. Because they have done what they have done—by instituting the tax increases immediately and the spending 4 years from now—it understates the overall cost of this legislation. The American people need to know this is a \$2.5 trillion bill when it is fully implemented. The only reason they can bring that in under that number is because they start raising taxes immediately and do not start paying benefits out for another 4 years.

So I say to the Senator from Texas, I hope when we get to this vote, it will be a big bipartisan vote in the Senate, and I hope we will make a change in this legislation that implements some semblance of fairness and also gives us a true reflection of what the bill really costs.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. I thank the Senator from South Dakota.

Just to recap, the amount that would actually be collected before any program is put in place would be \$73 billion—already collected. That will include, as the Senator from Oklahoma mentioned, schoolteachers from Oklahoma who are considered to have these high-benefit plans, a schoolteacher making \$50,000, \$60,000 a year with a high-benefit plan. And do you know what the tax is on that high-benefit plan? Do you know what the tax is on that Oklahoma schoolteacher? A 40-percent excise tax—40 percent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I thank the Senator, and I would just say I hope we get a bipartisan vote on this motion. I hope we get a bipartisan vote to say the one thing we ought to do, if nothing else, is be fair to the

American people. You do not pay taxes until the program is up and going.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to offer some unanimous consent requests to the chairman of the Finance Committee.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I offer a unanimous consent request that it not be in order for the duration of the consideration of H.R. 3590 to offer an amendment that has not been filed at the desk for 72 hours and for which there has not been a complete CBO score.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Montana.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I would like to just remind our colleagues, I have sought it, and I think it has been basically a very forthright, open process we have conducted here. Certainly in the Finance Committee—I see my colleague from Iowa on the floor—it was totally transparent for months upon months, with hearing upon hearing. We posted amendments in the Finance Committee on the Internet in advance of consideration.

I have never been part of a more transparent process since I have been here, frankly, at least for something of this magnitude over this period of time. In fact, one reporter even said to me: Senator, is this the new way we do things around here? It is so transparent, so bipartisan, and so forth. I said: I don't know. I sure like it that way.

I also remind all of us that Senator REID's amendment was made available on November 18 of this year, and 3 days later, on the 21st, we voted for cloture on the motion to proceed. Then, 12 days after the Reid amendment was made available, we finally began debate on the bill. And here we are, nearly a month later. So this bill has been out here.

The Senator mentioned, I note, having in mind the managers' amendment, which he has not seen and, frankly, this Senator has not seen either. I have some ideas what is in it, but I have not seen it myself.

I think as a practical matter this will be available for 72 hours, as the Senator suggests. Why do I say that? I say that because it is my expectation that Senator REID's managers' amendment will be filed very quickly, maybe in a day or two. It is also my expectation that we will then proceed, according to expectations here, to the Defense appropriations conference report, which we will then be working on for several days. And probably a cloture motion might be filed on the health care bill—on the managers' amendment probably not until after we do Defense appropriations. So during the interim, everyone is going to be able to see, at least

for more than 72 hours, the contents of the managers' amendment in the health care bill which Senator REID is going to be filing. So as a practical matter, I think it is going to happen.

I cannot at this point agree to the request to lock that in for 72 hours, but I think as a practical—

Mr. COBURN. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. BAUCUS. Yes.

Mr. COBURN. One of the reasons I want this, is it not his belief that the American people ought to get to see this for 72 hours as well and that it ought to be on the Internet and that everybody in America, if we are going to take one-sixth of our economy, ought to have the time to truly read—we are going to have a managers' amendment, and that is actually what mine is focused on.

Mr. BAUCUS. Sure.

Mr. COBURN. But to be able to truly not just read the managers' amendment but then go into the bill where it is going to fix the bill.

Mr. BAUCUS. I think that is a good idea. I think it is going to happen.

Mr. COBURN. But the Senator will not agree to it by unanimous consent?

Mr. BAUCUS. I cannot at this time but, again, saying it is my expectation it will be available for more than 72 hours.

Mr. COBURN. I appreciate the sincerity of the chairman's remarks.

Mr. BAUCUS. I thank the Senator. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I have another unanimous consent request. The following consent request would be associated with a Coburn amendment that would certify that every Member of the Senate has read the bill and understands it before they vote on the bill. The reason I ask unanimous consent that amendment be agreed to and accepted is that is exactly what the American people expect us to be doing.

So we do not have a bill right now. We do not know what is going to be in the bill. The chairman has a good idea what is going to be in the bill, but he does not know for sure. Only two sets of people—Senator REID and his staff and CBO—know what is going to be in the bill. I suspect somebody at the White House might.

But we ought to take and embrace the idea of transparency and responsibility, that the American people can expect every one of us to have read this bill, plus the amended bill, and certify that we have an understanding for what we are doing to health care in America with this bill.

I ask unanimous consent that be accepted.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Montana.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I certainly agree with the basic underlying import that we should know what we are voting on here. But I must say to my good